

It is very clear this decision was made based on sheer political pressure. The wealthy tribes were able to defeat poor tribes by effectively throwing their money around.

The article again noted that tribal opponents acknowledged having lobbied the White House and the DNC in addition to DOI on this issue.<sup>521</sup>

The day after his discussions with Fowler, O'Connor's St. Croix billing records reflect that he briefed Kitto on the Fowler conversations, had a discussion regarding "thank you" letters to the White House and members of Congress and had a discussion regarding fund-raising. Corcoran also engaged in follow-up efforts with the St. Croix, which included meeting with Kitto and Chairman Taylor on July 24.

Consistent with O'Connor's advice, soon after the July 14 announcement of the denial, the Indian tribes opposed to the casino application sent "thank you" letters to several individuals, including President Clinton, Chief of Staff Panetta at the White House, Chairman Fowler at the DNC, and Secretary Babbitt. For example, letters were sent over the signature of Ho-Chunk Nation President, JoAnn Jones to President Clinton and Babbitt stating, among other things, "Thank you for your role in the decision to deny the request to approve the Hudson casino." Ms. Jones denies writing or signing these letters. Fowler received at least three such letters in late July and early August 1995, one of which was sent by Stanley Crooks on behalf of all of MIGA. Kitto's records indicate that he drafted these notes for the tribes.

The DNC also undertook follow-up steps in the wake of the Hudson decision. Mercer apparently sent a card concerning the decision to tribal lobbyist Frank Ducheneaux, who

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<sup>521</sup>O'Connor's time records reflect that he also spoke with Corcoran and Kitto that day about "criteria voiced by opposition," an apparent reference to the content of the news articles.